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Mustang Bicycle Tour 13 Days

The long forbidden Kingdom of Mustang has always exuded an air of romance.

Mustang is the arid region at the end of the Kali Gandaki, beyond the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri ranges.

Lower Mustang is inhabited by people related to the Manangis whilst in northern Mustang (the ancient Kingdom of Lo), language and traditions are almost purely Tibetan.

With a rich and complex history with written records dating back to the 8th century Lo, like Dolpo, was once a part of the western Tibetan region of Ngari and maintained its status as a separate principality until 1951.

It is a land of barley fields and pasture and vast expanses of gray and yellow rolling hills eroded by the wind that howl across the area most afternoons. Sun baked bricks of pale mud are used for almost all construction, including the walls and palace of Manthang.



Itinerary

Day

- 01 Bus drive KTM-Beni & Bicycle to Galeshwor/ **Basic Lodge**
- 02 Local jeep Ghasa-Jomsom & Bicycle to Kagbeni/ **Basic Lodge**
- 03 Bicycle Kagbeni-Samar/ **Basic Lodge**
- 04 Bicycle Samar-Ghami / **Basic Lodge**
- 05 Bicycle Ghami-Tarang / **Basic Lodge**
- 06 Bicycle Tarang-Lomanthang / **Basic Lodge**
- 07 Bicycle Lomanthang-Rest-Vist Gompa/ **Basic Lodge**
- 08 Bicycle Lomanthang-Jaong cave & down (4hrs)/ **Basic Lodge**
- 09 Bicycle Lomanthang-Ghami / **Basic Lodge**
- 10 Bicycle Ghami-Samar / **Basic Lodge**
- 11 Bicycle Samar-Jomsom / **Basic Lodge**
- 12 Jomsom-fly back Pokhara / **Tourist Standard Hotel**
- 13 Drive Pokhara-Kathmandu by **Tourist Bus** or Itinerary extension in Pokhara on your own

Private Departure Cost (Per Person):

- 2 People- Euro 1648.00
- 3 People- Euro 1495.00
- 4 People- Euro 1350.00
- 5 People- Euro 1332.00
- 6 People- Euro 1263.00
- 7 People- Euro 1252.00
- 8 People- Euro 1209.00
- Single Supplement: Euro 78.00 Per person

Trek Cost Includes:

- English speaking trained bicycle guide
- Bicycle for Guide
- Porter to Carry Luggage (Jomsom-Jomsom)
- National park permits & 10 Days Mustang Special permit
- Private transfer Kathmandu-Beni
- (02-05 pax Jeep; 5+ pax Minibus)**
- Local jeep transfer (Gaeshwor-Ghasa-Jomsom)
- Accommodation while on trek-Twin sharing
- Taxi transfer (Pokhara airport-Pokhara Hotel)
- 1 Night Accommodation in tourist standard hotel-PKR
- Guest Flight ticket (Jomsom-Pokhara)
- Guide flight ticket (Jomsom-Pokhara)
- Tourist Bus ticket (Pokhara-Kathmandu)/ **Discuss with guide**

Not Included on Trek Cost:

- Personal expenses such as drinks, postage, laundry
- All Meals
- International flights and departure taxes
- Visa and passport fees
- Travel insurance
- Emergency evacuation
- Tips and gratuities
- Costs arising from unforeseen events outside control of Snow Jewel such as Landslides and extra expenses to carry luggage in transit due to Landslide upto Jomsom.
- Kathmandu-Pokhara flight (opt) **USD 98.00 p/p** one-way.



Note

Please note that the published itinerary is a statement of intent and to be used as a guide only. The guide in charge of your trip will alter the schedule if conditions necessitate and any/all such alterations are at the discretion of Snow Jewel and your guide.

Detailed Day to Day Itinerary:

Day 01: Drive from Kathmandu-Beni then Bicycle towards Galeshwor. **O/N Basic Lodge.**

Day 02: Today, in the morning you will be taken to Jomsom by **local jeep** via Ghasa. Same day bicycle upto along the Kali Gandaki to Kagbeni, gateway to Mustang. Here houses are flat-roofed in the Tibetan style and it is not uncommon to find ammonite fossils along the river. Nilgiri Peak dominates the skyline. **O/N Basic Lodge**

Day 03-05: From Kagbeni bicycle to Samar after crossing long steep climb. Samar, situated amongst a grove of poplar trees. Annapurna Himal is still visible to the south. Ridges, gorges and small passes traverse barley fields and juniper groves. Many of the villages have imposing chorten and, crossing the Tangmar Chu River, climb past the longest and most spectacular mani wall in Nepal. Charang is a maze of fields, willow trees and houses separated by stone walls at the top of the large Charang Chu canyon. There is a large dzong and a gompa with a good collection of statues and thangkas.. **O/N Basic Lodge.**

Days 06-07: Entering the Tholung Valley the trail becomes a wide path across a desert-like landscape of gray and yellow.

Lo Manthang, the capital of Lo, lies within a tall white washed mud brick wall. Narrow alleys wind between closely packed houses, temples, gompas and the palace. The surrounding fields produce a single annual crop of wheat, barley, peas or mustard. It is a prosperous town whose wealth was built on the wool and salt trade from Tibet. Despite disruption trade continues along this route and many Lobas also travel south to India to trade during winter. **O/N Basic Lodge.**

Day 08: Today continue excursion around Lo Manthang. Continue your bicycle ride upto Jaong Cave and follow the trail downwards.

Days 09-10: Follow irrigated fields out of the city, taking a last look back at Manthang from the pass. Ghar Gompa, situated in a grove of trees by a stream, probably dates from the same time as Tibet's first monastic institution, Samye (built 775-87) and contains a self-emanating statue as well as hundreds of painted carved stones, paintings and several large prayer wheels. **O/N Basic Lodge**

Day 11: Rejoining the bicycle trail in on, continue along The mass of Dhaulagiri I that makes a striking contrast back to the Kali Gandaki and to Jomsom.. **O/N Basic Lodge**

Day 12: In the morning fly from Jomsom to Pokhara. Wake up early and line-up for flight to Pokhara; rest of the day at leisure. **O/N Tourist Standard Hotel**

Day 13: End of Service. **Tourist Bus transfer** from Pokhara to Kathmandu (**As per discussion between Guest and Trekking Guide**). Optional flight back to Kathmandu USD 98.00 per person one way.



Accommodation

Accommodation in Kathmandu and Pokhara is on a twin share basis with private facilities.

Whilst trekking, accommodation is in lodges and teahouses and is of a basic standard. Rooms may be twin or multi share with basic shared toilet facilities. Showers are available in some places for a small charge.

Food

No meals are included.

In Kathmandu and Pokhara restaurants of every style and price-range abound.

On the trek meals are available in tea houses, lodges and bhattis with limited menus. Meals are generally simple, but filling, but you may wish to stock up on 'trail munchies' before leaving Kathmandu.

Trekking Staff

The **Guide** is in overall charge of the trek and looking after you. This is the person you should go to with all problems, concerns and questions. All our guides are highly trained in all aspects of trekking, conservation, high altitude medicine, first-aid and emergency procedures. They are professionals selected for their knowledge and passion for Nepal and its peoples, remember they are local guides and their English may be basic and limited to trek-related topics.

Porters transport your dufflebags – one porter for every two trekkers.

Visas and Permits

Nepalese Visa: Single entry visas for Nepal are available on arrival at Kathmandu airport and all land borders. The visa is valid for 60 days and costs USD 30.00 per person. One photo is required. The visa may then be extended by 90 days. For stays of 3 nights or less the visa is free, but 1 photo is still required. In order to apply for your visa you must

provide **Snow Jewel** with a photocopy of the details page of your passport 21 days prior to your trip. The visa will be issued once you arrive in Kathmandu – it takes one full day.

Currency Exchange

Most major currencies can be changed into Nepalese Rupees (NPR) at Kathmandu Airport and at Bank and Exchange Counters throughout the city. Credit card cash advances and ATM withdrawals are in NPR only.

MONEY

It is best to bring a mixture of cash and travelers checks in major currencies - USD, CAD, EUR, HKD, AUD. Everyone's spending is different, but as a guide we suggest E8-10 per day (if you drink or smoke this could be higher). Shopping is difficult to predict, but most people buy more than they intended.

TIPPING

Tipping is a personal and voluntary matter and tips are not included in the trip price. If you wish to reward the efforts of those who have worked to make your trip the best they can we suggest the following: - Euro 50-80 per driver and guide, depending on group size.

What you carry

Your duffelbag is restricted to 15kgs. The duffel bag is carried by porters and is not available to you during the day. Your daypack should contain all that you need during the day. This generally consists of warm clothing, water bottle, camera gear, sunscreen, lip salve etc. Your guide will let you know each evening of any extra items you will need for the following day. If you have a comfortable daypack you load will only be a few kilograms and hardly noticeable.

Trek Grading

It is impossible to have a 'foolproof' grading system as everyone has different expectations and perceptions of their own fitness level. Remember that no trek in the Himalaya is a stroll as all involve going up and down at altitude and that altitude affects everyone differently. Regardless of age or fitness, preparation before you arrive is essential. Aerobic activity, swimming, cycling or brisk walking is recommended or, at the very least, walk up and down stairs in your trekking boots.

Mustang Bicycle tour is a **Grade 3** trip involving altitudes around 4000m.

The Trekking Day

Some people have the idea that trekking is all sweat and hard work with no fun. This is far from the truth. Days are designed to be challenging, but not exhausting.

Obviously each day is different depending on terrain, distance to be covered, trail conditions and the pace of the group. However, as a guide, most days begin with breakfast at 7am. You will then need to pack up your duffel bags before breakfast, as porters will set off early. Most days you will be on the trail by 8am to

take advantage of the cool morning. Stop for a leisurely lunch around noon. This is generally about 2 hours, allowing plenty of time to explore the village or relax. The afternoon walk is shorter and you usually arrive around 4pm leaving time for excursions to nearby sites, exploration of the village or simply relaxing with a book and catching up on your diary. Dinner is generally around 7pm after which relax by the fire.

Insurance

It is essential that you take out comprehensive travel insurance prior to your trek. Your travel insurance must provide cover against personal accident, medical expenses, emergency evacuation and repatriation (including helicopter evacuation) and personal liability. We also recommend that it cover cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects.

Health

There are no specific health requirements for entry into Nepal. However, you should consult your doctor for up-to-date information regarding vaccinations, high altitude medication and medications for any reasonably foreseeable illnesses whilst traveling in Nepal.

Be aware that some drugs, including anti-malarials, have side effects at altitude. Please discuss this carefully with your doctor.

Please be aware that we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities for some time during this trip. We strongly recommend that you carry a personal First Aid kit as well as sufficient quantities of any personal medical requirements (including a spare pair of glasses).

Altitude

AMS (acute mountain sickness) is a serious issue. It is the result of the failure of the body to adapt to high altitude and can affect anyone, regardless of age or fitness. It usually occurs above 1,800 meters and the likelihood of being affected increases as you ascend. The way to reduce the affects of altitude is to ascend slowly, 300 meters per day above 3,000 meters until you have acclimatized. Poor acclimatization results in headache, nausea, sleeplessness,

Climate

Nepal has a generally temperate climate, however altitude makes distinct variations. The monsoon sweeps up from India each summer, making mid June to mid September humid and wet. The three other distinct seasons are all suitable for trekking and each has its own advantages. The best seasons for Kanchenjunga are autumn, when the countryside is lush and green, skies are generally clear and days are mild to warm and nights cool. In spring haze often builds during the day, limiting photography to the mornings, but the riot of color from blossoming wild flowers more than compensates. Changing global weather patterns have had their effect on the

Himalayan climate and mountain weather is notoriously changeable. Always be prepared for a change in conditions and note that if severe or dangerous weather conditions occur your guide's decision on any course of action is final. Winter (December-February) It is cold and you will need to be prepared, but the air is very clear providing the best mountain views. Spring (March-May) Days are increasingly warm and the rhododendrons are in bloom. Mist and clouds are not uncommon. Summer (June-August) The monsoon season. It will rain every day, although generally in the evening and night. The hills turn lush and green and at higher elevations the alpine plants will bloom. Autumn (September-November) The most pleasant trekking season where days are warm, but not hot; there is little chance of snow and skies are clear.

ONWARD TRAVEL

If you wish to stay longer in Kathmandu after your trip, we can book extra nights for you at our joining point hotel, please advise us when you make your booking. We operate treks and tours throughout Nepal including Chitwan and Bardiya National Parks, whitewater rafting and kayaking (seasonal), mountain flights and guided sightseeing tours of Kathmandu.

For Further Details Please Contact:

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Packing for your Trip:

- Rain jacket or poncho
- Water bottle - minimum 1 liter, aluminum or Nalgene polypropylene are best.
- Walking boots - lightweight, waterproof and well worn in.
- Socks - 4 pairs each thick wool/blend and thin cotton to be worn in combination - ensure boots fit such combinations.
- Running shoes or sandals for around camp
- Lightweight wool sweater
- Fleece jacket
- T-shirts - 2 or 3
- Shirt - longsleeved
- Pants - lightweight long trousers (jeans are unsuitable)
- Trackpants - warm for evenings around camp
- Hats - beanie with ear flaps or balaclava for nights / peaked 'French Legionnaire' style sun hat that will give neck protection during the day-
- Gloves - wool or fleece
- Scarf
- Underwear
- Thermal Underwear
- Swimsuit
- Sarong - a multitude of uses
- Snow goggles
- Sunglasses
- Bag liners - large, thick garbage bags to line and water/dust proof your duffle bag.
- Sewing kit
- Money belt
- Toiletries
- Towel
- Torch / flashlight - headlamp style is ideal
- Lighter - for burning toilet paper and rubbish
- Swiss Army Knife
- First Aid Kit

